



April 17, 2020: Transit-Oriented Development Open House Q&A

Session 2

Q. How can I provide input for the Rapid Transit Project?

A. The Rapid Transit project team is interested in hearing your feedback on this project. Surveys can be completed for the proposed Rapid Transit route and station locations:

- [2nd Street SW: West of Highway 52 Survey.](#)
- [2nd Street SW: East of Highway 52 Survey.](#)
- [Broadway Corridor Survey.](#)

These survey questions are also available on the [POLCO website](#) (if you complete the surveys above, you do not need to complete the POLCO survey as the information is the same).

Please contact our project team with any questions or concerns on the Rapid Transit project:

- Project email: rapidtransit@rochestermn.gov
- Electronic Voicemail: 507-328-2025

The project team looks forward to hearing your thoughts and suggestions.

A summary of the outreach conducted in February 2020 is in the [Engagement Summary](#) on the webpage. The Summary document reviews the meetings held February as well as the results of the questions that were in POLCO.

Q. Was Fire Station 3 considered as part of the development plan for a future building site? Not too remove the station but to incorporate it into a larger building.

A. The redevelopment of Fire Station 3 has not been considered. The Project Team will discuss further if the station could be incorporated into a larger development.

Q. Has potential traffic been coordinated with the selection of station locations?

A. The next phase of the project is to review the traffic impacts of rapid transit in the corridor and surrounding neighborhoods. At that time, traffic patterns have not been a significant influence on the selection of station locations. The following phase of engineering development will address station locations that impact traffic issues. These strategies include updating the station locations or adapting them with other approaches, such as station pull-outs.

Q. What options have been considered for the Rapid Transit route and transit stops?

A. While our project team has evaluated many options for both the route and transit stops, you may have ideas that we have yet considered. Our project team greatly appreciates these types of suggestions and will review them carefully in our planning process. With your help and feedback, we hope to create an effective Rapid Transit system to improve our neighborhoods and city as a whole.

Q. Why was 19th Avenue and 2nd Street selected as a proposed rapid transit station?

A. The station locations are proposed as part of this study for public review and comment. If any member of the public has concerns or comments on the proposed sites, the project team requests that those comments be submitted through the project email, rapidtransit@rochestermn.gov and project voice mail line, 507-328-2025.

The selection of 19th Avenue as a proposed station was based on the spacing between the West Transit Village station and the Saint Marys Transit Station and access to the surrounding residential neighborhoods. Additional factors, in favor of 19th Avenue, include:

- Existing traffic signal can be linked to transit signal priority
- Close to development opportunities
- Support among February open house attendees: access to Shorewood senior housing complex and Thesis Brewing.

Q. How will the frequency of the Rapid Transit impact traffic on 52?

A. In April, the City of Rochester began the process of completing engineering and environmental work related to the future rapid transit project. As part of this work, a complete traffic impact study, including recommendations on mitigating factors, will be completed.

One of the elements that will ensure rapid transit is a high-amenity service is the frequency in which vehicles will visit stations. During peak rush times, before and after work, a rapid transit vehicle is anticipated to stop at a station every 5 to 10 minutes. In order to achieve this level of service, vehicles will need the advantage of traffic signal priority systems and uncongested travel lanes in the form of dedicated or transit-only lanes.

The system's service requirements will be included in the traffic requirement and will determine if changes are necessary. Potential changes may consist of modifications to the frequencies of the Rapid Transit service or other roadway system changes, such as additional traffic signals.

Q. Has the land-use scenario and recommendations presented at this point in the study for the West Transit Village included noise impacts from the rapid transit vehicles?

A. At the West Transit Village, the goal is to support a centralized hub of activity by placing the rapid transit station, internal street, central open space, and retail frontages together. Colocation will enhance the viability of retail, and

provide concentrated pedestrian traffic at the beginning and end of each weekday. An attractive open space close to retail will be an amenity for residents and draw in visitors. Open space within the development will have a different landscape and public space character than the connection to the trails and ample naturalized open space of Cascade Lake. The selection of this placement is to ensure that the site is visible, inviting, and accessible from both 2nd Street SW and the Cascade Lake Trails. This location will further communicate that the Transit Village is open to everyone throughout the day and week. Noise concerns will be reduced through the use of high quality, contemporary buses, which may be electric.

Q. Is 2nd Street SW going to be activated for the transit village?

A. In accommodating the Rapid Transit system, 2nd Street SW should have a new character. It will be enhanced to become a more pedestrian and bicycle-oriented street. Streetscaping found further east on 2nd Street SW will be extended to the Avalon Cove intersection. Unlike the previous concept, the new development at the West Lot will be organized to address 2nd Street SW, with building access points facing this street. The faces of the buildings can be well-articulated with windows on all floors providing eyes on the street, visual features, and massing variety to provide visual interest. These features will interrupt the wall plane, and offer a sense of activation and presence by people.

Q. The proposed Rapid Transit route is also a significant corridor for utilities. Are there any big picture utility upgrades planned that could prevent having to re-excavate the road in the future? For example, tunnels or conduits through which utilities could be run without digging?

A. As part of the implementation of the future rapid transit system, two utility improvements are expected. The most substantial investment is tied to the reconstruction of 2nd Street from 11th Avenue and 16th Avenue. In this roadway section, the city plans on replacing the driving surface and, when doing so, intends to make utility improvements. Included with the 2nd Street reconstruction is a pedestrian tunnel that will connect the Saint Marys Hospital to a new and improved westbound transit station on the north side of 2nd Street. Finally, some small utility improvements such as electrical and information systems will be upgraded within the road right of way to provide amenities such as enhanced travel time information and heating at transit stations.

Q. Will there be underground parking at the West Transit Village? If so, will it be the entire site like the previous concept?

A. The West Transit Village will not incorporate underground parking for safety and quality reasons due to an underground water table.

Q. Can you describe the dispersal of mixed-use (assume that is ground-floor retail) versus concentrating the retail to create a destination?

A. The placement of mixed-use buildings, typically containing retail or office storefronts with residential uses above depends on the particular station location. In general, retail should be concentrated to create a destination, as seen at 19th Avenue SW, 6th Avenue SW, and 9th Street SE. In particular contexts, like at St. Marys Hospital, along Highway 52, and at 9th Avenue SW, existing plans for development were used to indicate locations for future mixed-use or larger buildings. Active ground floors can also include residential entrances and homes. Resident privacy can be achieved with landscaping, slightly raised ground floors, recessed entrances, translucent rather than transparent windows, and other techniques.

Q. Is a tunnel still being considered at the St. Marys station?

A. A new, improved Saint Marys Hospital Station has been included as part of the enhancement of downtown transit. The improved Saint Marys transit station includes shelter upgrades to the station area on the south side of the 2nd Street, a climate control station waiting-area and transit information on the north side of 2nd Street, and a pedestrian tunnel connecting the two sides of the road. Elevators and escalators will be incorporated into the north side transit station to ensure individuals can access the tunnel.